So it just tells me that when we talk in kind of a theoretical way about taxes, we have to be mindful that we are really talking about that young individual, and we are talking about what his parents were able to leave and keep in the family. They had to sell the house and they will get a minimal amount. They will get 30 percent out of the total of the value of their property.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. If the gentleman will continue to yield, it is, again, the story of the little red hen. Here we have people who did not help bake that bread who are saying, well, we are entitled to over half of the loaf of bread. And again this is not just about tax policy, it is about fundamental morality.

Clearly, we need tax revenue. We have legitimate things that are needed as a society, whether it is the common national defense, for highways, lots of other needed projects, but any time we see a tax rate that gets above 50 percent, and the gentleman is absolutely correct, very quickly the estate tax gets to 55 percent, that is confiscatory. That is wrong. That is part of the reason people started shooting up at Lexington and Concord. And Americans still have that basic feeling about fairness, and it really transcends things.

Mr. SHAYS. And if we are talking about the concept of fairness, why should a married couple pay more than a couple that is not married in taxes? Why should someone who has earned Social Security and if they go back to working and paying taxes pay an additional penalty due to the Social Security earnings limitation? For every $3 above that $17,000, $1 is taken out of Social Security. That was a matter of fairness. And the third tax cut that we move forward with, why should a corporation be able to deduct health care and a private individual working, self-employed individual, not have that same deduction? In fact, the tax cut that the President vetoed just 2 years ago allowed all Americans to deduct for health care.

So I am just struck by the fact that we have made tremendous progress, we are talking about fairness in taxes, but we are also talking about something else. We are talking about what taxes will help the economy grow.

In 1990, I voted for a tax increase. The one tax increase I voted for, and I learned a big lesson. I voted to increase the luxury tax. And it was interesting, I voted to increase the luxury tax and the government got less money. They got less money because people, who can all make rational decisions, they decided that if the tax was higher, they would buy less, and we got less revenue. Conversely, when we dealt with capital gains, we cut taxes and we got so much more revenue.

So what two better examples. We can raise some taxes and get less revenue; we can cut some taxes and get more, and we can have the economic engine, that balanced budget agreement of 1997, which has made a world of difference. It has balanced our budget. We are in surpluses. We are no longer spending Social Security. We are able to cut taxes, and we are seeing the economy grow and grow and grow.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. If the gentleman will continue to yield, and going back to the luxury tax, I remember the argument at the time that somehow this would punish people who had made lots of money who were buying expensive boats. Well, it did not punish them at all. It punished the poor people working in the boat yards that built the boats.

Mr. SHAYS. Well, this hits home pretty hard, because they were not poor people. They were middle-income and upper-middle income people who were making boats, having great jobs. It was one of the true indigenous industries in the United States; where we did not have many exports. We were making the product and selling it in the United States. And it, unfortunately, did a lot of damage. A lot of companies went out of business.

Mr. GUTKNECHT. The other analogy about the boats is the story President KENNEDY used, that a rising tide lifts all boats. And if we have some fiscal responsibility, as we have seen in the last 5 years, that by properly managing the budget and by controlling the growth in Federal spending and by allowing families and investors to keep more of what they earned, we have had a much stronger economy. And we have been able to lift a lot of boats out there. And it is not just the people making a million dollars a year, it is an awful lot of those people making $30,000 and $35,000 and $40,000 a year. I see our chairman is back.

Mr. KASICH. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I just wanted to make the point by saying we are going to pay down a trillion dollars in the publicly-held debt. That is a breathtaking number.

Mr. SHAYS. In the next 5 years.

Mr. KASICH. Over the next 5 years. A trillion dollars in paying down part of this publicly-held debt. Secondly, though, we have got this tax relief, and it does not threaten Medicare or Social Security. Social Security is protected in this bill. Medicare is not only protected but it can be enhanced with the prescription drug program.

So I think what every American ought to know, when somebody says we want to have a tax cut and some politician says, oh no, it is going to threaten Social Security and Medicare, that that simply is not true. We provide for the strengthening of Social Security and Medicare right up front. And once we have done that, we then feel that we should have tax relief.

And we also provide in this budget that if we pass this tax relief but it does not get signed by the President, that that tax relief, that money does not get used for more spending. That money does not get used for more spending. That money goes to pay down additional debt.

So I think what every American ought to know is to be able to have this kind of a proposal before us this week is something that I think they ought to think about. Do not get caught by a car salesman, a used car—no, I do not want to say that. I was going to say used car salesman. I know more good used car salesmen. Let me say this, do not get trapped by some smooth talking person moving peas under a shell who says we cannot have tax relief because the politicians want to spend it, because they want to spend it, and that we are going to hurt Social Security. We protect Social Security, protect Medicare, pay down debt and have tax relief for all Americans.

I think it is a pretty significant accomplishment. I appreciate the gentlemen taking the time and presenting their arguments. They were outstanding.

A COMMEMORATION OF FAITH AND POLITICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to commemorate and to recall an extraordinary weekend that I and many of my colleagues had the opportunity to spend with our colleague, one of the historic Members of this House. He is probably, I suppose, the most historic Member of this House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS).

The event that we participated in just a couple of weeks ago was under the aegis of the Faith & Politics Institute, headed up by the Reverend Doug Tanner. Reverend Tanner delivered the prayer, Mr. Speaker, at the opening of this session of the House, and he is here with us on the floor. It was an extraordinary opportunity for many of us to relive with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and with others the courage and commitment shown by some Americans so that all Americans would have the right to avail themselves fully of their constitutionally guaranteed right to vote.

We went to Birmingham, Alabama, then to Montgomery, then to Selma, and back to Montgomery. Montgomery, Alabama, is, of course, the capital of Alabama. Birmingham, as I will say briefly, was the site of a confrontation between freedom and evil, between those who would deny other human beings basic rights because of the color of their skin. We see in today's world across the globe that happening too often, where nationalism

and racism and other ethnic divisions drive people to commit heinous acts against others.

It is appropriate that we remember what has happened in the past so that we can hopefully avoid it happening in the future and sensitize ourselves to the pain of others when they are inadvertently shut out, even if we are not consciously setting them aside and denying their rights.

□ 2100

Mr. Speaker, as we stand at the dawn of a new century and join the strongest economy in 50 years, we sometimes overlook what brought us to this point. Two weeks ago, as I said, we were again reminded, reminded that the book of American history includes chapters that are both repugnant and, thankfully, triumphant.

We were reminded that the courage to confront injustice and inhumanity is an indelible part of our national character. And we were reminded, Mr. Speaker, in the words of abolitionist and journalist Frederick Douglass, if there is no struggle, there is no progress.

On Sunday, March 5, we witnessed dramatically this progress, and we honored the courageous and continuing struggle for social justice. Two Sundays ago, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), who is here with me on the floor, cochaired with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) this effort and the congressional participation in the Institute on Faith and Politics.

We were joined by nearly 20 other Members of Congress, by President Clinton, leaders of the civil rights movement and thousands of others in Selma, Alabama, to commemorate a seminal moment in American history, Bloody Sunday. That phrase entered the American lexicon on March 7, 1965, 35 years ago, when Alabama state troopers and the posse of sheriffs, so-called deputies, attacked 600 men, women and children who had marched peacefully across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.

Those brave marchers who were lead by our colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), and Reverend Josiah William had committed no crime or offense. In short, there was no reason that they would be attacked by those who were sworn to uphold the law, protect the citizens of Alabama, and honor the Constitution of this great Nation.

Those marchers had simply demanded the most basic of American rights, the most basic right in any democracy, the right of a citizen to express their opinion to participate in the decision-making process of their Nation, by voting. In Selma, in 1965 less than 1 percent of eligible black residents were registered to vote. Not, Mr. Speaker, because they did not desire to vote, not because they did not think that voting was important, but because they were being precluded by various devices. Literacy tests, poll taxes, intimidation were the weapons used to disenfranchise and discourage those from participating in their democracy.

The marchers sought to change that, but their rightful demand was met with nightsticks, bullwhips, tear gas, ignorance, and hatred. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) who has now joined us on the floor, was one of the first to fall, Mr. Speaker. The gentleman led this march through the courage of his convictions, not just for African Americans, but for all Americans, knowing full well that if justice was not accorded to African Americans, it would not be accorded to any American ultimately.

The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) when ordered to do so by the state troopers stopped in his place as he crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge. They told him to retreat. Rather than retreat, however, he bowed his head and began to pray; and the response of the Alabama state troopers on that March 7, 1965, was to assault the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and those with whom he marched.

They fractured his skull with a nightstick, injuring him seriously. That event was a dramatic historic event in the history of this country. A few days later, President Lyndon Johnson put these horrific events into context, declaring to a joint session of Congress, and I quote, ''At times, history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point in man's unending search for freedom.'' ''So it was,'' he said, ''at Lexington and Concord, so it was a century ago at Appomattox, and so it was,'' Lyndon Johnson concluded, ''last week in Selma, Alabama.''

Tonight, Mr. Speaker, I want to especially thank the Faith and Politics Institute for organizing this recent pilgrimage to Alabama and for allowing me and so many of my colleagues to attend. As we walked by the statues of snarling dogs in Birmingham's Kelly Ingram Park and toured the 16th Street Baptist Church where four little innocent unknown beautiful girls who happened to be black died in a murderous explosion in 1963.

I was struck, Mr. Speaker, again, by the depth of the gentleman from Georgia's (Mr. LEWIS) courage and commitment to justice for all and how that same courage and commitment was shared by so many men, women, and children that we will never know.

Mr. Speaker, we rise to commemorate their courage tonight and their perseverance too; for on this night, March 21, 1965, began the Selma to Montgomery march that successfully concluded on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol 4 days later.

The marchers who were brutalized on Bloody Sunday and the marchers who made it to Montgomery 2 weeks later reminded us that nightsticks are no match for reason; that bullwhips stand no chance against courage; and that ignorance and hatred have no place in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

A little more than a year later, a year after Bloody Sunday, Robert Kennedy summed it far more eloquently than I can hope to do; and I repeated those words as we met at the end of that incredible weekend. He was speaking in Capetown, South Africa, to a group of African students; and he said this, that ''each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or speaks out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, they build a tide that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.''

There were 600 people who left the AME Church, the Brown AME Church in Selma, walked the few blocks to the Edmund Pettus Bridge, who were standing up for an ideal, were speaking out against injustice, were acting to improve the lot of others. And as the attack on them appeared on television that night, they, through their courage and commitment, built a tide that did, in fact, sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

What a debt of gratitude, Mr. Speaker, this Nation owes to those brave souls.

So it was in Selma in 1965. And what 1965 tells to us most clearly is that it is that way today. We have made much progress. But all of us know there is a far way to go.

There is a great song, Mr. Speaker, that ends with this refrain in the first verse, ''Facing the rising sun of our new day begun, let us march on til victory is won.''

History tells us that full victory is never won. There are victories in battles. But, unfortunately, man's inclination to discriminate against his fellow man always seems to crop its head above the surface.

And so, I say to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), he teaches us a lesson and all those with whom he marched; he honored us by allowing us to help commemorate that day with him and others who marched on that day. Let us all pray that, when the next time comes, we too will have the courage that he displayed to stand up, to speak out, to act against oppression, to, with him, knock down those mighty walls of oppression and resistance.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), as I said, a historic figure who has contributed beyond perhaps all of us collectively to the realization of what this great democracy means not just to the

American people but to the peoples of this world.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my friend and my colleague, who is really my friend and my brother, for yielding and for hosting this special order tonight, along with my friend, my colleague, and my brother, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

I want to thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for those wonderful words and for being part of this journey, this dialogue, this trip, this privilege to Alabama.

In my position here in the Congress, but as an individual, as co-chair of an organization, Faith and Politics, with my good friend and brother the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), this was our third trip to Alabama. We felt it was necessary for us to travel as Members of Congress with our spouses, with our staff members, and with our friends to go, to see, to feel, to travel the roads where other travelers 35 years ago and more to go back to Birmingham, as my colleague stated, to visit the church, to visit the park where the dogs and the fire hoses were used, to visit the city of Montgomery, visit Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s church, to visit the memorial to the civil rights martyrs, to travel to Selma and to visit the Brown Chapel AME Church, to walk across that bridge across the Alabama River one more time.

I think it was not just a trip, but it was an opportunity for us to bond, to become brothers and sisters, to become, yes, a band of brothers and sisters to engage in a meaningful discussion, a meaningful dialogue about race.

Because I think what the struggle was all about 35 years ago, and still today under the leadership of Doug Tanner and the good people of Faith and Politics, to bring us together to that point where we can lay down the burden of race and build a truly beloved community, to build a truly interracial democracy in America, where committee can forget about race and color and see people as people, as human beings.

I think that is what is so meaningful about a group of us coming together not as Democrats, not as Republicans, but as Americans, as men and women, who believe somehow and some way that we can find a way to create a sense of community, to create one house, one family, the American house, the American community.

So I am so thankful and grateful tonight to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for taking the time out to have this special order to share with our colleagues and share with our friends this journey to Alabama, this journey of reconciliation, this journey on understanding.

□ 2115

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for giving us all that opportunity and for his comments which are as compelling tonight as he always is, because they are real, heartfelt, and live sentiments. I thank my colleague. We are all honored to be his friend. I now want to yield to another extraordinary American. In the context of cochair of the Faith & Politics Institute, an American who comes from an extraordinarily different background from the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), who superficially people would say is much different than the gentleman from Georgia but they look on the outward manifestation of the color of skin which is just a superficial difference because he is, as the gentleman from Georgia referred to him, very much a brother, very much someone whose heart and head tells him that we are all in this together and we need to respect one another and lift one another up. We are all honored to serve with him in the Congress of the United States, my friend the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON).

Mr. HOUGHTON. I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), I thank the Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and thank so many of my associates here. I want to particularly thank the gentleman from Maryland for putting this together. It is the right and it is the decent thing to do. It is timely. And frankly what we are trying to do is to encourage others to be more involved in this enormous experience which we had down in Selma. As a matter of fact, we have had for several years now. The person, of course, that has driven it is a fellow called Doug Tanner who is the head of the Faith & Politics Institute.

The gentleman from Georgia and I originally said that we would join the Faith & Politics Institute so long as we had no work to do because we were busy enough as it is, and all of a sudden we find ourselves doing more and more and more and more for Mr. Tanner, this Christlike figure who stands up there and feels, well, it is only because you want to do it, that is what is happening. I think the gentleman from Georgia would agree, we are doing far more than we originally bought into, but it has been enormously satisfying.

I think one of the things that struck me in this extraordinary experience in going to Selma and going there with the gentleman from Georgia was just the gentleman from Georgia himself. I know this is embarrassing for the gentleman from Georgia to hear all this, but it is true. Martin Luther King is no longer with us. It is tragic. Here was a man who was born 3 years after I was born and has been dead over 30 years.

But the younger members of that group, the SNCC, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee were there and when you see not only our friend the gentleman from Georgia who is an associate of ours and works here and legislates with us and has been with us all along, and then to associate with Betty Fykes and Bernard Lafayette and Jose Williams and people like that, they are all alive, and they were the people that drove this whole thing, the younger people. I think one of the things that comes along is that the younger people really are the ones that say damn the torpedoes and go ahead and do the things which are right and the others are a little more conservative. As a result, we owe the gentleman from Georgia, not only as our friend, but also this enormous leader a tremendous debt of gratitude.

I hope those people who are listening will recognize this; I think we all do around here. I will always remember when John came to Corning, we had a continuation of the days of dialogue in upstate New York, in the district in which I live. It was extraordinary to see him at work there, because all of a sudden people said, here is the man that did all this, here is the man that led it. We had not realized what he stood for and what he was doing, what he represented. And then, of course, he had this wonderful associate, Sheila Sisulu, who is the South African ambassador here. Sheila Sisulu as many Members I am sure realize is the daughter-in-law of Walter Sisulu who was one of the two other partners of Nelson Mandela and stayed in South Africa and went to Robben Island, was there with him for over 20 years while Oliver Tambo went to Lesotho to keep the African National Congress going. She is the daughter-in-law.

But there was the gentleman from Georgia talking about the oppression that he was fighting, that he was literally willing to lay down his life for. I am sure there were times that he never thought that he would live another day. And here was Sheila Sisulu talking about the institutionalized apartheid in South Africa, what they had gone through. It made me realize how lucky we are to be Americans and to live in this particular time. It was just extraordinary.

There were other things that came along. Just the singing, the music. I know the singing of Betty Fykes and what it did to you in 1965 but what it did to us. Here we were just standing there and all of a sudden this lovely lady burst out into song. It cheered our spirits and made us feel better about things. And then, of course, I take nothing away from the gentleman from Maryland's eloquence and he is a very eloquent man but I will never forget being in Brown Chapel following the pastor of Brown Chapel and the gentleman from Georgia and then me, this former glassblower from upstate New York trying to make some sense out of the message. It was an awe-inspiring feeling.

Mr. HOYER. If the gentleman will yield, he notices I chose to speak before the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. HOUGHTON. If the gentleman will notice, he placed me after the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. HOYER. I apologize for that. That was an unfair thing to do.

Mr. HOUGHTON. When you hear those words and the emotions behind them, it does something to you. That is why this extraordinary experience is so important to be shared with everybody. This was an unusual year. It was the 35th anniversary of that march. It was unusual for another reason, because the President of the United States came down there. When the President of the United States comes down, it just changes the whole nature of it. But the crowds that were there and how they related to the words and the younger people that spoke. It was just a really extraordinary experience. It did something to me.

Again as I mentioned earlier, I would love to be able to share that with others. There is one downside, if I could just mention very briefly, is that while we celebrated the 35th anniversary of this extraordinary experience and honored those people who had led us, the fact is that there is still tremendous racial tension. You could see it even in the school system in that area where most of the people in the old days used to be in the high schools, the official high schools were white. Now most of the people in the high schools are black. But where do the white people go? Many times they have gone into private education. They have not integrated the way I know that the gentleman from Georgia and the gentleman from Maryland and others had hoped they would, and how we had hoped they would.

So the people that would say that Affirmative Action is wrong and we can go on automatic pilot and this thing is a thing of the past, there are no more Bull Conners, there is something very subtle going on here. It will not be erased for years and generations and generations to come. That is the thing that we have got to work on. It is not only what we do but really who we are.

I will always remember a wonderful story about Archibald MacLeish giving a lecture. He was most of the way through, a student raised his hand and said, Mr. MacLeish, you have only got about 5 minutes to go, could you sort of sum up what you have to say? He said, yes, I will, I would sum it up like this. Don't forget the thing and the student said what do you mean by the thing? Mr. MacLeish says, the thing is what you are is just as important as what you do. That is why we so applaud and honor the gentleman from Georgia and all his associates. I thank the gentleman from Maryland again for allowing me to speak.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman from New York for the depth of his integrity and the quality of his leadership in this House.

I want to yield to my very good friend, someone for whom I have a great deal of respect and affection, who has spent his time as a Member, he has been with this institution for a long period of time. I guess he is now in his third decade of work in this institution but a relatively new Member, succeeding his mentor and a great Member of this body, Bob Michel, but who has done as much as any Member in this body to try to bring us together collegially irrespective of party or faction or ideology, and that is a service that this institution needs. I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for this hour that has been set aside by the gentleman from Maryland to sort of commemorate and share a little bit about the trip that some of us took, much of which has been talked about already in such great detail as the gentleman from Maryland has done and then the gentleman from Georgia and also the gentleman from New York.

I want to add my thanks to Doug Tanner for the work that he does with the Faith & Politics, to the gentleman from Maryland for this hour and really to say that normally these hours are set aside by Members to talk about issues that are near and dear to their heart and in particular in some cases that they feel very strongly about, and so for us to take this hour and talk about an opportunity that all of us had to share an experience in Selma, Alabama, to share the experience in Birmingham, to share the experience in Montgomery, to share the experience of walking across the Edmund Pettus Bridge is an opportunity for us to say to the American people that we do come here to make laws, to pass bills, but we also come here from districts where we return to demonstrate leadership, and not always in the bills that we pass but more on the other things that we do.

Part of what some of us have done was to travel to the Deep South and to observe in a very surreal fashion because we were there with the gentleman from Georgia and many of his friends and compatriots and colleagues that were there 35 years ago. And this opportunity was offered to many but only a few of us went. And so for some of us to be able to experience, the second year for me, I went last year, my wife and I went again this year, it was different. It was different this year because of the huge mass of people that were there, in large part I think because the President was there which again highlights the importance of the event and highlights the importance of what took place and highlights the importance of dialogue and race relations and faith and politics coming together.

But it is important for us I think to go back to our districts and to share with our constituents and to meet with leaders in our districts and talk to them about the importance of dialogue, about the importance of race relations, about some things that have happened that we call progress but also talk about many things that we need to do to make further progress. I certainly intend to do that. I am hoping to invite the gentleman from Georgia to my hometown of Peoria, Illinois, to have him have a dialogue and to help conduct a dialogue and to be a part of a group of leaders in my community that can talk about race relations and the progress we have made but the long drive that we have ahead of us.

Finally, let me say that we have 435 in this House. Each one brings a little different background, a little different dimension, a little different experience, but there is only one among us who has the kind of background and influence and standing in the civil rights movement, in the voting rights movement, in the race relations movement, in the faith and politics movement and that is the gentleman from Georgia. He is one unto his own when it comes to voting rights, race relations, civil rights, because of what he has done, because of what he has experienced and that he did not come here forgetting it, he came here to say to people, follow me, let me show you what we have been through and what we need to do in the future.

So for the 434 of us who know the gentleman from Georgia and for the few of us who know him as a friend, as a brother, as somebody who is a leader, a power of one, I think if we do not take anything else away from our experience in the House, it will be the fact that we were a part of the experience of the gentleman from Georgia, and hopefully we will be a part of an experience of doing more and carrying on what the gentleman from Georgia has really begun earlier on in his life.

□ 2130

JOHN, thank you for being a part of this wonderful institution and doing more than just coming here and passing bills and giving speeches but setting an example and saying to us, come with me and share my experience and then go back into your communities and provide the leadership. Without your leadership, without what you have done, we would not be doing what we are doing, and so we are grateful to you for being more than just a Congressman from Atlanta, Georgia, but for being a leader and continuing to be a leader.

So I say thank you to you, and we look forward to continuing to work with you hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, to improve race relations in this country and we do have much work ahead of us.

I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for devoting this hour

to our experience and for articulating so well what we were able to experience in Selma and Birmingham and Montgomery. We look forward to working with all of the Members to carry on what we need to do here and back in our districts.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) for those remarks. We all share his view of JOHN's place in this House.

I yield to my friend from the city of brotherly love. I say that not facetiously. We in Penn wanted that to be a State and City of Brotherly Love, but we know all too often in this Nation where brotherly love is preached and brotherly love gets a doff of the hat from time to time, unfortunately there are too oftentimes when it is not practiced. So I am pleased to recognize someone who went with us and who added immeasurably to our experience, a gentleman from the Philadelphia region and Montgomery County, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL).

Mr. HOEFFEL. I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for arranging for this hour, giving us a chance to come together this evening to talk about our trip to Alabama.

It was a remarkable experience for all of us who participated in this civil rights pilgrimage to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the voting rights march in Selma. I want to thank the Faith & Politics Institute and Doug Tanner for his leadership and for bringing us together.

It was remarkable to visit the civil rights movement landmarks that I had never seen in person before, to learn more about the history of this country in the 1960s. It was equally remarkable to meet so many of the leaders of the movement and the foot soldiers of that movement, so many of which are still with us today, still providing leadership.

It was particularly remarkable to be there with JOHN LEWIS. Many people tonight have spoken in high praise of JOHN, and I want to do the same. Someone said it was almost surreal being there with JOHN, and it was. For me, the surreal moment was riding in the tour bus I think between Montgomery and Selma, and watching on the television screens in the bus parts of the documentary, Eyes on the Prize, of the civil rights movement, seeing a young JOHN LEWIS being interviewed, speaking back in the 1960s, and then looking down the aisle of the bus and seeing JOHN LEWIS today moving around talking to his colleagues on that bus.

It certainly drove home to me the remarkable passage that this leader has had in the civil rights movement and how special he is to all of us. JOHN embodies virtually every important moment of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. He helped to organize and lead the lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville in 1960. He was one of the 11 original freedom riders in 1961. He helped to organize the March on Washington and spoke eloquently there in 1963 and, of course, led the voting rights march at Selma in 1965, right at the front row.

It was just remarkable to see that footage watching my new friend, JOHN LEWIS, in 1965 be run over by the police forces and beaten because he wanted to march for voting rights, because he had the courage to stand forward and the courage to do it in a nonviolent way; the courage to use passive resistance to reach the heart and soul of the American people and say there has to be a better way; there has to be a better way to have true freedom and equality for all Americans.

So I would say to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), I certainly learned a new appreciation for the hard work and the sacrifices that were made by many leaders and many foot soldiers to win civil and voting rights for all Americans.

I also developed, I believe, a deeper understanding of the work that remains to be done, to make sure that all Americans really have the equal justice and the full opportunities that we want them to have.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), who provided and provides wonderful leadership for the Faith & Politics Institute, already talked about Selma of today compared to Selma of 1965, and it is an interesting comparison. In 1965, legal segregation was the order of the day and the official today, I guess, would be called high schools were all white and the black children went to school in segregated high schools. That was true throughout the Deep South.

Well, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 changed many, many things in this country; but today, in the year 2000, Selma still has a form of segregation. It is de facto now. There is only one set of public high schools. And as the gentleman indicated they are almost all black; and the white students have chosen to go to different schools, religious schools or private schools. So there is a different kind of segregation.

The work that JOHN LEWIS fought so hard for 35 years ago and that we commemorated a couple of weeks ago still has much to be done in the face of that segregation, and I do not mean to pick on Selma or Alabama or the South of today because that kind of segregation really occurs everywhere; in the North, in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, the suburbs of Philadelphia, which I represent.

The schools are integrated and there is a great racial understanding in the suburban school that my daughter attended and my son currently attends, but there is social segregation. The blacks tend to socialize and congregate and eat lunch together and the whites tend to be together, and there is understanding and there is good relations but there is still that social segregation.

There are subtle forms of segregation in the North, almost as bad perhaps as the legal segregation of old in the South. In the Philadelphia School District, because of a lack of local resources and indifference from our State government, Philadelphia school kids have $2,000 less per pupil spent on them than suburban school kids do, $2,000 less in the big Philadelphia School District. That is not strictly a racial result, but there is a subtle form of segregation happening there.

As the President so eloquently said in Selma a couple of weeks ago, when he spoke to us all, that as long as there is de facto segregation in the public schools in Selma we have another bridge to cross; as long as there is $2,000 less available to educate school children in Philadelphia than school children in the suburbs of Philadelphia, we have another bridge to cross. As long as social injustice and discrimination continues to occur in this country, we all have another bridge to cross. As long as parents work two jobs but cannot bring home a living wage, there is another bridge to cross. As long as families do not have health care, as long as seniors cannot get the prescription drug coverage they need, we have another bridge to cross.

We all agree on that. We differ on some of the ways to get across that bridge, and we have policy disputes down here. And that is why we are here, and that is the beauty of this body. But we have to recognize that as important as it is to remember what happened 35 years ago and to honor amazing Americans like JOHN LEWIS, we have to learn from JOHN and take inspiration from JOHN but be honest with ourselves about the problems that still exist and face those problems forthrightly, face them together and understand that we are all in this together.

If we recognize that and work together, then we will truly honor what happened 35 years ago. If we fail to work together today, then much of what happened in the past will be for naught, and none of us can stand for that result to happen.

So I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for his leadership. I thank JOHN LEWIS and the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON) and all of my colleagues who attended, and particularly those speaking here tonight. I was glad to be a part of it and will continue to work with you.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) for his comments and for his making a comment about the time between what was done in 1965 and that bridge being crossed, and I would comment that when we crossed the bridge in 2000, 35

years later, I think all of us were struck by the fact that there were Alabama troopers on the other side of that bridge but their response, when the end of the Edmund Pettus Bridge was reached by JOHN LEWIS and others, was to salute, to salute in honor of all that JOHN had accomplished and all that JOHN represented, and showed a revolutionary change in those short 35 years.

The governor of Alabama, rather than talking about interposition and other doctrines of States' rights, met JOHN and the President at the bridge and Governor Siegelman welcomed JOHN LEWIS home because, of course, JOHN LEWIS comes from Alabama; moved to Georgia and represents that State very well.

I think the gentleman from Philadelphia (Mr. HOEFFEL), from Montgomery County as opposed to Montgomery, Alabama, made very clear the point that the march of 1965 continues to this date.

Now I would like to recognize my friend who now represents Birmingham and surrounding areas in Alabama, a former member of the State legislature, a State senator who himself was involved in the struggle, who himself was a fighter for freedom. I am pleased to recognize and yield to my friend, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD).

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, first let me say that it was indeed a pleasure having all of my colleagues in the Seventh Congressional District in Alabama. I represent three major cities in Alabama, Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma, and those were the cities where most of the civil rights activities in the Nation took place, and the surrounding areas, of course.

For the last 4 years, we have been going, Members of Congress, to Alabama, participating in what we call a renewal demonstration; one that shows our commitment to the future. It also shows that we are not satisfied with the past, but presently every time we go, every time there are such activities, it highlights the wrongs of the past but it also shows a brightness for the future.

The good thing about our presence there, we bring the spotlight of the Nation to Birmingham, Montgomery and Selma, and problems of the past.

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But when we highlight problems of the past, we also show lingering problems that are still with us. This time when I crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, I said to myself that there are so many bridges in our lives that need to be crossed. We still have in this country the racial divide.

But I would like to associate myself with the remarks of all the prior speakers, but especially the remarks of the last gentleman who spoke. We not only have problems in Selma, Birmingham, and Montgomery, but in this Nation. It is how we approach the problems now as compared to the past that is so interesting, because there is really no comparison.

Even though the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) and others were nonviolent in their approach, it was not universal. I would like to think that we are approaching that universality, that we are getting close; that every year more and more people join the cause and more and more people want to do good and more and more people cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge with us. I would like to think that in America things are getting better, and hopefully, with what we will do, they will continue to get better. But I realize in each one of our lives there are still Edmund Pettus Bridges that must be crossed.

So because of our experiences in going to Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham, and because of our lifetime commitment here in Congress to democracy and to our society, I think that it is good to go and participate yearly, so that we can renew our commitment, not only as individuals but as Members of Congress.

If we could, by our presence continue to spotlight the evils of the past and the goodness of the present, I think we will continue to chip away at those problems that exist, and we will continue to build democracy. I think that is what we all should be about.

I would like to thank Doug Tanner. Four years ago when I first heard about him putting together this annual civil rights tour, I thought that it was a great idea, even though I had some apprehensions; not because of the thought of violence, but I wanted to know how it would come off and what would be the ramifications, because just going and being there would only satisfy and help the few of us that had the experience.

But after we came back, Members told me, you know, I saw you on TV. I heard some of the speeches, and I am going next year. Every year someone tells me that they are sorry that they did not go.

So everywhere in America I go now people say, you know, I am coming down to Selma next year. I hope that is indicative of the change in how we think, not only about Selma, but all the problems associated with Selma, because, in reality, Selma is a little America. The people there in every respect represent America; and if we can go there and talk about problems that exist, that is the first step, and it is the very first thing we must do in America.

We cannot hide our past, and we should never forget our past. But as long as we can remember, discuss, and talk about the past and the problems, maybe we are on our way to solving them, and that is the good thing about the activities and about doing it and being involved.

So, Doug, I really thank you for all your institute is doing; and I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) for calling us together tonight so that I could say thank you for coming, so that I can invite you back next year or the year after next, whenever the decision is made when we will go. Also I would like to thank the President for coming and thank America for being there. They were there in so many ways, whether it was by TV, radio, or in spirit. I would like to think that all of us marched this time across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Let me thank the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) for being there 35 years ago, and let me thank the gentleman for being there this time. Let me thank all of you, and I invite you back.

Remember this: Selma is America. You can come there, just as you can go home.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much. We appreciate his comments and appreciate his welcome to his district and appreciate his invitation back.

I think I pointed out, and the point that was made by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) was apt, that Selma is America, and America can learn lessons from Selma, as Selma needed to learn lessons from America.

Doug Tanner, we all do thank you. You have made our lives richer, more whole, by your ministering to us, ministering to us in a variety of different ways, some of which some would say are religious, some would say secular, but surely ministering to our souls and to our hearts and to our heads so that we will be better persons and treat one another as we would want to be treated.

As I was sitting here and listening to all of you speak, I thought to myself, we rise here every day as we begin this session and pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The lesson of Selma is for all. Indivisible. We cannot segregate rights and expect any of us to long enjoy those rights. That, JOHN, is the lesson I think you were teaching to the country, that Martin Luther King, Jr., was teaching to the country.

If you hold truths to be self-evident and you say that all men are created equal and endowed not by the State, not by government, but by God, by their creator, with inalienable rights, then God's creatures mean for all, liberty and justice for all.

JOHN, I think you made us a little more cognizant of what that really means; and as the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD) has pointed out, it teaches us better how to go home with our friends and neighbors, families and colleagues, and to emphasize how important it is for our Nation to be better

than it is today. As great as it is, as just as it is, it can be better, if we realize that we must have it as a Nation with justice for all.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for giving us this time to commemorate an extraordinary experience in the lives of each one of us.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues. I honor and thank my brother, JOHN LEWIS; and I thank my friend, Doug Tanner.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I join a number of my colleagues in commemorating the 35th anniversary of the Voting Rights March from Selma to Montgomery. I was honored to be a part of the Faith and Politics Institute's Congressional Civil Rights pilgrimage a couple of weeks ago. It was powerful to hear from those who had experienced the struggle firsthand. It was informative to learn about these historic events while actually at the sites. It was inspiring to walk in the same places as those who stood up for justice.

Thirty-five years ago, our country experienced some of the lowest and highest points in our history. On the one hand, law enforcement agents and elected officials violently opposed the basic democratic right of voting for African Americans. On the other hand, ministers, students and regular citizens stood up for their most basic rights as Americans. Congress responded by passing the Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the crowning achievements of the Civil Rights Movement.

Unfortunately, the work of Martin Luther King and JOHN LEWIS and so many others is still unfinished. We have made many strides toward equal rights and progress toward racial equality. But the issues surrounding race remain among the biggest challenges facing our country. When we review our country's legacy around slavery, the historical record is still incomplete.

One of the items on that unfinished agenda is that the U.S. government has never apologized for its role in slavery. A few years ago, I saw a television program with a Black minister and a White minister commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. They stated that there had never been an official apology for slavery. With my country's Civil War, all that President Abraham Lincoln achieved and the successes of the Civil Rights Movement, I found that hard to believe.

So I went to the Library of Congress and discovered that they were right—no one in the Government of the United States had ever apologized for slavery. Therefore, I set out to correct this glaring omission in history. On June 12, 1997, I introduced my simple resolution without any fanfare.

What happened next was a complete surprise. It exploded on the political scene at about the same time President Clinton was conducting his ''National Dialogue on Race.'' Both conservatives and liberals, blacks and whites dismissed it as ''a meaningless gesture'' or ''an avoidance of problem-solving.'' After considering it, President Clinton decided not to apologize because of the fear of legal ramifications.

I received hundreds of letters and phone calls about the apology. Most of the people I heard from opposed the idea and some were blatantly racist and hateful. Very few people stood up and defended the idea and necessity of an apology. At times, I felt very alone in this struggle to do what I know is right.

I know that my resolution will not fix the lingering injustice resulting from slavery. But reconciliation begins with an apology. I hope this apology will be the start of a new healing between the races. I introduced the resolution because it is the right thing to do.

Many of the opponents to the apology argued that slavery had been abolished over a century ago and no one alive in the United States today had been a slave or a slave owner. But that ignores the fact that slavery's effects are still with us.

Just one of the many examples of slavery's legacy is in terms of assets. Slaves, of course, were not able to earn any money or pass on an inheritance to their children. When African-Americans were freed after the Civil War, they started at a distinct disadvantage. Then they were shackled with Jim Crow laws and segregation that prevented them from truly entering into society. Only within the last two generations have descendants of slaves legally able to join American society. Not only was it not a level playing field, the game itself was stacked against people of color.

Now in the 21st Century in the richest nation in the world, blacks control only 1.3 percent of the nation's financial assets, while they are around 12 percent of the population. Whites possess a staggering 95 percent. Almost two-thirds of black households have no net financial assets. Blacks and whites with equal incomes possess very unequal shares of wealth.

Our work is obviously not finished. I am proud to stand up with my colleagues and voice my support for efforts that promote racial reconciliation. My special thanks to JOHN LEWIS and AMO HOUGHTON for organizing the pilgrimage to Alabama and the ongoing ''Congressional Conversations on Race.'' I look forward a time when the record is corrected and we can truly celebrate the accomplishments that have brought about ''One America.''

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the special order just given.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr WELDON of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

NIGHTSIDE CHAT ON TOPICS OF CONCERN TO AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. MCINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, once again we are here this evening for a little nightside chat. There are a number of different subjects I would like to cover this evening.

I would like to start out by talking about the loss of a good friend that I had last week, just a short comment in that regard. We are going to move on and talk about the Congressional Medal of Honor. We lost one of our heroes. If you want a true definition of hero, take a look at the people that serve in our military forces. We lost one in Colorado. I will talk a little about him. Then I want to move on and talk about the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms people.

We had a very interesting item in Colorado over the weekend about the enforcement, or lack of enforcement, by the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms department in their inspections regarding firearms sales. As you know, across the country guns have become somewhat of a sensitive issue.

Now, last week when I addressed you, we talked a little on Operation Exile. I know that my colleague, the gentleman from the State of Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM), is going to introduce a bill tomorrow to assist our local States and our local communities on their Project Exile, so we will highlight a little of what he is attempting to do. We will talk about our public awareness campaign and talk about some of the responsibilities of gun ownership.

Then, if we have some time this evening, I would like to touch again on the death tax. As many of you know, that is a very punitive tax in our system. It is a tax that has devastating impacts on small businesses, has devastating impacts on farms and ranches across the country; and, frankly, this is not a justified tax.

It is a tax supported by the administration. In fact, the administration has proposed a $9.5 billion increase in the death tax this year. I am confident that we can stop that. But just so you no, there is a big difference of opinion on the policy of the Democratic administration to raise death taxes and our position on the Republican side that says death taxes are fundamentally unfair, they are unjustified, and they should be eliminated in this country.